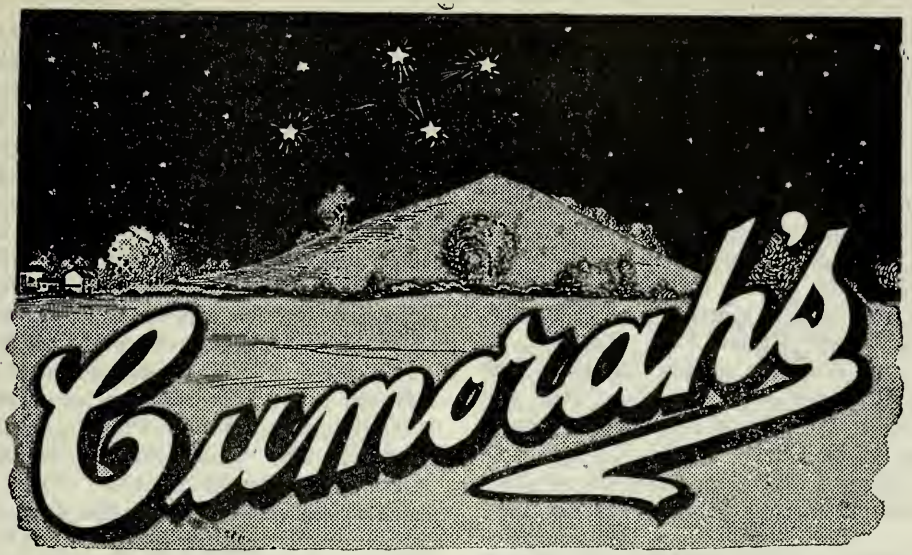
Hill "Cumorah" on which Joseph Smith found the Book of Mormon Plates



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"SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS."

Elder B. H. Roberts

It is fitting on the present occasion that our thoughts should turn to Him whose advent into the world is this day celebrated throughout the foremost nations of the earth. One can but feel a little perplexed, however, as to the avenue of approach to so great a subject as Jesus the Christ. After much thought, however, I have chosen the avenue of approach indicated by the text at the head of this address.

The request to see the Christ was made at a time when the affairs of the young teacher from Galilee were approaching the sublime climax of His career. The enemies of the young Master were discouraged. He was at the full tide of increasing faith in Him among the people, because of the miracle seen in the resurrection of His friend Lazarus. Triumphantly, He had entered Jerusalem, amid the waving of palms and the singing and rejoicing of the people. Apart from all this rejoicing, His enemies among the Pharisees were sullenly complaining one to another, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world has gone after him!"

It was just then that certain Greeks presented themselves to Philip, one of the twelve, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." Philip conferred with Andrew, another of the twelve, and together they told Jesus of the desire of the Greeks to see Him. Whether the interview was granted or not is not of record; but recalling the habitual courtesy of the young Master, we presume it was granted. Be that as it may, we have in their request what may well now be considered a world-wide desire, "We would see Jesus." If granted a few moments for reflection in which to formulate what would be, among Christian nations at least, the one overwhelming desire of all the people among such nations, that desire would be ex-

pressed, I believe, in the words of the text, " We would see Jesus."

Believing the desire to see Jesus to be true, I am undertaking the task, so far as it may be within my limited powers, to show unto you Jesus, alleged to be the " Son of man and also the Son of God."

Necessarily, the presentation of Him must be a gradual revealment. We may not take Him by the hand and lead Him forth into your physical presence, saying, " Behold, the Christ! " But this we may do: We may gather together such things that are of record about Him and so group them as to give you a mental vision of the Christ that shall abide with you forever. Ambitious undertaking this, I know; bordering on presumption, perhaps. But if you knew the reverence with which I approached the task, I feel sure you would not censure me on the charge of presumption.

Who is this Christus?

Who is this Christus whom this day we seek to honour by reflecting His Spirit of peace on earth and good will toward each other? One who knew Him intimately, in both His public and in His private life, and who was the chief witness " of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem," speaks of Him—and this in the great official discourse delivered on the day of Pentecost, and while under the spell of the Holy Ghost—Peter speaks of Him as " Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you." (Acts 2 : 22). And later, the same apostle-witness says, " God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." (Acts 10 : 38.) " There is one God," wrote Paul, " and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Timothy 2 : 5.)

When the case of Jesus was before Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea, his wife, troubled by a distressing dream concerning the Nazarene, sent to the very judgment seat in the midst of the hearing, a warning to Pilate, saying: " Have nothing to do with this just man." That is to say, with reference to doing Him any mischief. Pilate himself said to the chief priest, " I find no fault in this man." (Luke 23 : 4.) And again, " Ye have brought this man unto me. . . . . I have found no fault in this man." Thus was He viewed in one aspect of Him—a man! When Pilate could not prevail with the rabble to let Jesus go, he brought Him forth with the purple robe upon His shoulders and His crown of thorns upon His brow, both placed upon Him by Herod's soldiers in mockery of His alleged royalty; and Pilate said to the frantic mob, " Ecce Homo!—Behold the man! " (John 19 : 5.)

This is one view of the Christ, one phase of His nature—the man. He was human: He was and is man. May I say without offence—thank God for that! Physically and mentally, and in "possessing soul " the Christ was man.

I love that parallel which Shakespeare draws between the Jew and the Christian, " Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons. . . . . warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? "

And as by this token of identity in physical and mental characteristics between the Jew and the Christian, there is established identity of human nature between them. So in the likeness between the Christ and men is established identity of physical, mental and soul-nature of men and the Christ. For the Christ lacked in nothing that goes to the making of a man—except in the matter of sinning. He was born of woman, nursed at her breast, grew by slow degrees from infancy to childhood, from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood. He suffered weariness and pain, hunger and the sense of being homeless—for while the foxes had holes and the birds of the air nests, " the Son of Man had not where to lay his head." (Matt. 8 : 20.)

Known as the " Man of Sorrows."

Also He was acquainted with grief and was known pre-eminently as the " man of sorrows." He was despised and re-

jected of men, and knew the anguish of betrayal by His friends. He was hailed before prejudiced courts, condemned, scourged, mocked, bruised, stricken and whipped through the streets of Jerusalem, as bending beneath the weight of His cross He dragged His way towards the place of His crucifixion—the place of skulls. He died on the cross in agony between two thieves, so wrung with the agony of utter aloneness that He cried out aloud, amid the jeers of his enemies, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? " (Matt. 27 : 46.) Beyond this there could be no deeper agony!

On the other hand, He had His joys, even while passing through this vale of tears and of grief. There were some drops of joy, though draughts of ill might come between; some gleams of sunshine struggled through the clouds of renewing storms. Friendship was His, and the confidence and the love of little children. He drew them close to His heart and would not have them put away. Also the " common people heard him gladly." (Mark 12 : 37.)

There were moments of exaltation, too, of triumph, the visitation of angels, the consciousness of union with God, and the approval of His work by the Father. Time and again came the assurance from God the Father, " I am well pleased! " And He had joy from the success of His humble ministry. When the seventy disciples reported their mission and the power in it. Jesus, " rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Luke 10 : 21.)

These physical characteristics, identical with man's physical nature; this life of mingled joys and sorrows, hopes and disappointments, triumphs and defeats, all bear witness that the Christ was human. He was and is of our race; we are created " after his kind." For it is written, and it is part of the Word of God, that " both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2 : 11.)

" Ecce Homo—Behold the Man," the Man Christ Jesus, the young peasant teacher of Galilee, the citizen of the despised Nazareth. Behold Him as brought forth from the judgment hall of Pilate, bound with cords, a crown of thorns upon His brow, a purple robe hanging closely over His shoulders, the face drawn and haggard from the long night's suffering. Not a friend in all the sea of upturned faces of the mob could be seen. He is friendless and alone, and sick to the heart of Him. The blood sweat of the night in Gethsemane has greatly sapped His strength. You may see Him now and here, in the limitations of His manhood. " Ecce Homo!—Behold the Man! "

So contemplated, there is a fascination about Him, and we wonder how like He looked. Many have tried to describe Him; but nothing really authentic has come to us from sculptor or artist. St. John tells us His vision of Him on Patmos. But this was a vision of the Christ glorified, with hair like wool, but white as snow; eyes as a flame of fire, the countenance as the sun shining in his strength, and voice as the sound of many waters.

Pen-picture of Christ by Willis.

This is the Christ of the vision. We would like to see Him as a man and ministering among men. The best portraiture I have seen of Him of this kind is the pen-picture of Him by N. P. Willis, one of our too much neglected American poets. This pen-picture occurs in his " Leper." It is the story of a young nobleman of Judea who in the time of Christ became a leper, and under the Law of Moses was driven into the wilderness, there to remain until he should die—" for God had cursed the leper." Under these circumstances the Christ found him in the wilderness.

It was noon, and Helon, for such was the leper's name—was kneeling by a stagnant pool. He heard footsteps approaching, and as he had no strength to flee he covered his face and cried, " Unclean! " as a warning, and fell upon his face till those whom he heard should pass.

Nearer the stranger came, and bending o'er
The leper's prostrate form, pronounced his name—
" Helon! "—the voice was like the master tone
Of a rich instrument—most strangely sweet;
And the dull pulse of disease awoke.
And for a moment beat beneath the hot
And leprous scales with a restoring thrill.
" Helon! arise " and he forgot his curse
And rose and stood before him.
Love and awe
Mingled in the regard of Helon's eye
As he beheld the stranger:
He was not
In costly raiment clad, nor on his brow
The symbol of a lofty lineage wore;
No followers at his back; nor in his hand
Buckler, or sword or spear;
Yet in his mien
Command sat throned serene, and if he smiled,
A kingly condescension graced his lips;
His eye was blue and calm, as is the sky
In the serenest noon, his hair unshorn
Fell to his shoulders; and his curling beard
The fulness of perfected manhood bore.
He looked on Helon earnestly a while,
As if his heart was moved, and stooping down
He took a little water in his hand,
And laid it on his brow and said, " Be clean! "
And lo! the scales fell from him and his blood
Coursed with delicious coolness through his veins,
And his dry palms grew moist, and on his brow
The dewy softness of an infant's stole.
His leprosy was cleansed, and he fell down
Prostrate at Jesus' feet, and worshipped him.

However, we may not stop at this point, with our development of the Christ theme —with Christus as man. Jesus, the Christ, was more than the foregoing picture of Him represents. While a man of our race, He was a man plus the inspiration of God, at least, all accorded Him that. And we are assured that the inspiration of God—" the Spirit " was given to Him without measure. (John 3 : 34.) " God annointed Jesus of Nazareth," says St. Peter, " with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him! " (Acts 10 : 38.)

So at least, the man Christ Jesus was man plus " God with him." He was a prophet like unto Moses; of whom Moses himself said, " A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." (Acts 3 : 22; Deuteronomy 18 : 15.) " A great prophet," the Christ was called, " mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." (Luke 24 : 19.) Many of the people said concerning Him: " Of a truth this is the Prophet! " (John 7 : 40.)

Christ was more than a Prophet.

Aye, He was every whit a prophet, mighty in word and deed, and more than prophet. God at sundry times and in divers manners had spoken to the fathers by the prophets, but with the advent of the Christ among men, God " spake unto men, by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Also in this same scripture Paul proclaims Him to be the " brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of the Father's person; " and as " upholding all things by the word of his power; " and who when He had by Himself purged the world of its sins, " sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1 : 1-3.)

These powers were beyond the functions and the powers of the prophets. Here is world-creating power, accorded to the Christ; world-sustaining powers; sin-redeeming powers! These powers had not the prophets. Moreover, to which of the angels at any time did God say, " Thou are my son? " Or, " I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son?" Or to what angel or prophet did God say, when bringing him forth in His work—" Let all the angels of God worship him? " Or unto which of the angels or the prophets did the Father say " Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a

scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom? " Or, " Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish but thou remainest . . . . . and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." (Heb. 1 : 10-12.)

To none of the Prophets did God, the Father, say these things; but to the Christ He said them; and they exalt the " Man Christ Jesus " above all the angels and all the prophets. The Christ, by these inherent things in Him hath attained a more excellent name, and higher and more perfected attributes than they. " The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee," said the angel Gabriel to Mary, when betrothing her to God; and " the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1 : 35.) And that which He is " called," that He must be—the Son of God, " the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1 : 14.)

Paul, who spoke of Him as " the Man Christ Jesus," also said, " Great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifest (manifested in Bible margins, as a clearer rendering of the word ' manifest ') in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3 : 16.) All this in plain allusion to the Christ, which reduced to its simplest form, and retaining all its values, yet adding no syllable to its phrasing, means; Jesus Christ was and God is manifested or revealed in the flesh; or, God was revealed to the world in Jesus Christ, or again: Jesus Christ was God incarnate.

Peter declared Jesus as " Son of the Living God."

St. Peter, as we have seen, spake of the Christ as more than man—" For God was with him; " and as one " who went about doing good," giving us a view of Him here as a prophet; but also when the Christ asked His disciples whom they thought Him to be—Simon Peter answered positively: " Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." And the Master, well pleased with that solemn declaration, responded to it with: " Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 16 : 17.)

And St. John says, " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men . . . . That was the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world . . . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth . . . . . For the law was given to Moses (a prophet) but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1 : 1-17.)

If the scriptures can be relied upon to establish any truth, these scriptures establish the truth of the Deity of the Christ—God revealed. He is proclaimed the Creative Power in the universe; the World-Sustaining Power of it; the Vital Force; the Intelligence-Inspiring Power of the universe; the True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; " The Inspiration of the Almighty," that giveth understanding to the spirits of men. (Job 38 : 36.) Above all, the Christ was the Love Manifested Power of God to mankind. He became their Redeemer through love of them. For as " God so loved the world that He sent Jesus Christ (His Only Begotten Son in the flesh) into the world, that men through him might be saved," so the Christ so loved the world that He came to pay the supreme sacrifice for their redemption, by giving all that could be given by man or by Deity for their salvation—He gave all, and suffered all, and for all.

Ecce Deus! Behold God revealed by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. God, however, must be universal, not local. Everywhere, not somewhere; near at hand, not afar off; a present help for time of need,

not a prospect. And when God is proclaimed to be Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ, God; then God is limited by form, by dimensions; limited in space; His movements limited by time; for if God be limited by form, by dimensions, then it must be as true of Him as of all things of form and dimensions. He cannot be in more than one place at a time. He cannot be in two or more places at the same instant. Any change that may be made in position will require time for necessary movement.

Conception incompatible with conceptions of philosophers.

These limitations, necessarily true of things of dimension and form, are incompatible with the highest conceptions of God, both theologians and philosophers will say. And such conceptions do not conform to the needs of man in his relationship with God. We may grant all this to be true. And yet here are the revelations that God has made concerning the Deity of the Christ. " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," that is God, said the Christ to Philip. " Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me." (John 14 : 8-11.) What shall we do then, in the dilemma presented? How can we reconcile the revelations of God with what seems to be the necessary nature of God? Who shall speak that word of reconcilation, with an appeal in it to the human understanding, shall be accounted a benefactor to the religious world. It is beyond man, however, to speak such a word. His power shall never reach it. God must speak it, and God has spoken it. Have you not read in the word of the Lord to Moses:

> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said, Let there be light; and there was light. (Gen. 1 : 1-3.)

Observe these things:

1. In the beginning God—
2. And the Spirit of God—
3. And the Spirit of God moved—

the creation of God began:

" Let there be light, and there was light," and so following in all the creative acts.

" God," and the Spirit of God," and movement. That Spirit of God in our modern revelation is called " The Light of Christ," because it " proceeds forth " from Him, and is of His nature. Sometimes it is called " The Light of Truth," because it is the light by which truth is discerned. This " Light of the Christ " is declared to possess creative power. " He (the Light of Christ) is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made." The same is said of the moon, and the stars, and the earth also. " And the Light . . . which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your understanding, the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (St. John 1.) " Which Light "—"the Light of Christ" —" The Spirit of God " of Genesis— " which Light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space." " The Light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things." (Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 88.)

God manifested in the flesh through Jesus.

This is the reconciliation that God gives of His revelation concerning Jesus Christ as Deity, God manifested in the flesh as a person, a person in the sense of being an individual—" The Man Christ Jesus "—God revealed. And yet also God infinitely expanded out into all space, as an everywhere presence, and everywhere present with power—God immanent in the universe, and carrying into that universe every power and glory and attribute of Deity, without diminution or abridgement—God everywhere! God at hand, not afar off. God present in and sustaining His creation, guiding it to the ends which from the beginning was proposed, and He shall not fail it. Thus Paul's conception of God as " not far removed from everyone of us; for in him we live

and move and have our being . . . . for we are also his offspring." Thus David's conception of God from whose everywhere presence he could not flee. For if he ascended up into heaven, He was there! if he made his bed in hell, behold He was there; should he take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there God's hand would find him and hold him. If he should say " surely the darkness will cover me," even the night would be light about him. Yes, the darkness hideth not from God; for him the night shineth as the day. There is no escape from God. (See Psalm 139.)

Here, then, in Christ Jesus, as revealed in the Scriptures, we have God manifested in the flesh; and in the "Light of Christ," which is " in and through all things;" the Creative Energy, the World-upholding Power, and Guiding Principle, Vital Force and Intelligence-inspiring Power in all things. And more than all, the Love-manifesting Power of the World, proceeds forth from the Christ and fills the immensity of space. This, too, is God, because it is Christ, even the Spirit of the Christ. One with Him in nature, the mind of Christ expanded into the immensity of space. And as the ray of light leaving the surface of the sun is not severed from the sun, so the vibrations of the mind of the Christ are never severed from Him—the source of that Spirit, which is everywhere present, and everywhere God; Ecce Deus! Behold God, in Christ Jesus, our Lord! Let us worship God, and in that universal prayer given to the world by the Christ Himself, and in which all men, without exception, may join, so all-inclusive is its spirit, and so expressive of human needs and reverence for God, and so fitting a close of this day—The Christ's day!

Our Father which art in heaven (and here in earth also, and everywhere). Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Suffer us not to be led into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

—(Address delivered over the Radio, Salt Lake City, 25th December, 1927.)

Christmas.

By Elise B. Alder.

" Why do bells on Christmas ring?
Why do little children sing?
Once a lovely, shining star,
Seen by shepherds from afar,
Gently moved until its light
Made a manger—cradle bright.

" There a darling baby lay
Pillowed soft upon the hay,
And his mother sang and smiled
' This is Christ, the holy child.'
So the bells for Christmas ring,
So the little children sing."

—Lydia A. C. Ward.

Christmas as we all know is a most delightful day. People all over our broad land, even those who do not recognize its beautiful religious significance, unite joyously in this time of gift giving and good will to all mankind. There is a legend that on every Christmas eve the little Christ child wanders all over the world bearing on its shoulders a bundle of ever greens. Through city streets and country lanes, up and down hill, to proudest castle and lowliest hovel, through cold and storm and sleet and ice, this holy child travels to be welcomed or rejected at the doors at which he pleads for succour. Those who would invite Him and long for His coming set a lighted candle in the window to guide Him on His way hither. They also believe that He comes to them in the guise of any alms craving wandering person who knocks humbly at their door for sustenance, thus testing their benevolence. In many places the aid rendered the beggar, is looked upon as hospitality shown to Christ. This legend embodies the true Christmas spirit which realizes with a rush of love to the heart, the divinity in every one of the least of these our brethren. Selfishness is rebuked, the feeling of universal brotherhood is fostered while the length of this holiday

season, by encouraging the reunions of families and of friends provides a wonderful rallying place for early affections.

A wholesome and joyous current of religious feeling flows through the entire Season to temper its extravagance and regulate its mirth. Christmas is the birthday of One whose chief contribution to the human heart and mind was His message of boundless universal love. He brought to the world the greatest thing in the world and that is why the Season of His birth has won such an intimate place in our hearts and why its joyous bells find an echo there.

If the spiritual good cheer of Christmas Day were generally manifested throughout the year it would transform mankind. Love is still the greatest thing in all the world and winged messengers of joy carol these words:

" So old and strange the Wise men seem,
And yet, how well we know
' Twas your Dream and my Dream
They followed long ago!

" The camel bells sound faint and far,
But though they fall so light,
'Twas your Star and my Star
They followed through the night."
—Nancy Byrd Turner.

Like the Wise men of the East who brought gifts to the Christ Child, we make gifts at Christmas time. Let us choose wisely, give intelligently and not extravagantly.

" A mother was watching on Christmas night
Rocking her babe by the candle light
And she lifted her eyes in the gathering gloom
For the Christ Child stood in her lowly room.
' What shall I give to thy child? ' He said,
Softly caressing the sleeper's head—
' Nay! said the mother, O angel guest,
Give her what ever thou deemest best; '
' What shall I give her, O mother mild,
Ask what thou wilt for thy little child.
Shall I kiss her brow that her eyes may shine
With a beauty that man will call divine?
Shall I touch her lips that they may flow
With songs the sweetest the world may know? '
' Nay! said the mother that will not stay
Songs are forgotten and hair turns gray.'
' But what shall I give her? ' He asked again,
' Ask and thou shalt not ask in vain.'
And the mother lifted her eyes above
' Give her purity, truth and love; ' and the
Christ Child turned to her gentle and mild
' Thou hast chosen the best for thy little child
Be not afraid though life be sore
I shall be with her forever more.' "

George McDonald says—" If instead of a gem or even a flower, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels must give."

The most obvious lesson in Christ's teaching is that happiness is not in having or in getting but only in giving.

There are many strange customs in celebrating the Yule-tide. But one thing is the same everywhere, The Universal Christmas Spirit. It makes us feel more than ever that people all over the land are very much like one big family after all. It is a beautiful custom derived from days of yore that this festival, which commemorates the announcement of the religion of peace and love, has been made the season for gathering together of family connections, and drawing closer again those bands of kindred hearts, which the cares and pleasures and sorrows of the world are continually operating to cast loose; of calling back the children of a family to assemble about the paternal hearth, that rallying place of the affections, there to grow young and loving again among the endearing memories of childhood. It seems to throw open every door, unlock every heart. " Happy, happy Christmas that can win us back to the delusions of our childhood days." " Peace on earth, good will to men " is the message " In peace the earth grows kindly and beneficent: With good will men grow kindly and loving. In peace the earth laughs in its harvests; in good will men joy in their gifts.

Henry Van Dyke says: "It is a good thing to observe Christmas Day, but there is a better thing than the observance of Christmas Day, and that is, keeping Christmas. Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe the world; are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world—stronger than hate, stronger that evil, stronger than death—and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem over 1900 years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love? Then you can keep Christmas. To give is to gain."

And unless Christmas means some sacrifice and some radiance of joy and comfort and hope to a human being, it will indeed be a dull and cheerless Yuletide. Let this Christmas be one of happiness, and the new year will be radiant with hope and filled with the impulse of doing some thing for somebody every day.

"What angels sang on that first Christmas morn,
'Good will to men,' 'The Prince of Peace is born.'
Breaks once again in benediction clear,
Sure song of God, the climax of the year.
'Good will and peace,' the song is on the air,
'Good will and peace,' I hear it everywhere—
'Peace on earth,' in purpose divine,
'Good will to men'—and a good will to mine
Oh friends unseen, no gift is in my power;
Gold would be dross in this triumphant hour.
Take, then, the strains the angels sing to me
'Good will and peace, I send it all to thee.'"

Friendships.

A man that hath friends must show himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.—Prov. 18 : 24.

The man who has been friendly, as he thinks back over the events of his past life, must realize that some of the most precious blessings that have come to him are the results of friendships. Many people do not appreciate the value and satisfaction of friendships. Adult friends are therefore rare because most of us are too self-centred to be capable of forming true friendships.

Boys in their teens and girls also, develop friendships as loyal and generous and selfless as the love of man and wife. Their capacity for friendships has not yet been destroyed by selfishness, prejudice, fear of public opinion and eager competition for the right to survive.

Friendship requires the recognition of complete equality—not equality of birth, education, rank or wealth, but the spirit of equality, and complete trustfulness. One cannot feel superior to a friend. As Emerson puts it: "The highest compact we can make with our fellow is—Let there be truth between us two forever more. . . . It is sublime to feel and say of another, I need never meet, or speak, or write to him; we need not reinforce ourselves or send tokens of remembrance; I rely upon him as on myself; if he did thus or this, I know it was right."

Friendship must be wholly free and, like freedom, it cannot be defined by rules. There can be no obligations or restrictions or duties except the voluntary and unspoken ones that are natural to friendship. But there are real obligations and restraints that are essential to friendships. If my friend honours me with his trustfulness and admiration I am in duty bound to do nothing to belie his judgment or good taste. If he would defend me against all criticism, I am obligated to give him no reason to do so. If he would share his last crust with me, I am obligated not to take unfair advantage of his generosity. In friendship there is no self-seeking, no deceit, no

dissimulation, no misunderstanding, no want of trust.

The reason that we have so few real friends is that we are too selfish to pay the price. We are willing to take but we do not believe that " it is more blessed to give than to receive." We separated ourselves from the friends of our youth and thereafter become too critical, too absorbed in our own success to make new ones.

A true friend, however, is a gift of the Gods. No other possession makes one so rich or gives so much to make life sweet and satisfying.

"Friendship makes prosperity " brighter," says Cicero, " while it lightens adversity by sharing its griefs and anxieties."

" Angels from friendship gather half their joy."

SOUTH AFRICA WELCOMES YOU.

To our happy surprise, Elders Victor Jay Allen, Dean Arvin Ellsworth, Wilford Lee Freeman and Harold Dean Jensen, arrived *via* the *Guilio Caesare* on the 21st of November. They have already been absorbed into the " oneness " of the great missionary movement and are diligently engaged in the service of our Heavenly Father.

Elder Allen is from Hyrum, Utah; Elder Ellsworth from Pocatello, Idaho; Elder Freeman from Brigham City, Utah; and Elder Jensen from Salt Lake City, Utah. Elders Allen and Freeman have been assigned to labour in the Transvaal District, Elder Ellsworth is in the Natal District and Elder Jensen remains at " Cumorah."

It is needless to say how welcome these recruits are to the work and their efforts will be sincerely appreciated by their companions and by the members of the Church in this beautiful land of South Africa.

May our Heavenly Father bless them and inspire them that they may have health, success and happiness during their stay with us.—B.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

It is Christmas time—the time of gifts. And so we would give to all of the members and friends of the South African Mission. You have all been so sweet, generous and kind to us throughout the past year and we would like to show our appreciation. Emerson says: " The only gift is a portion of thyself." Therefore the poet brings his poem; the shepherd his lamb, the farmer corn, the miner a gem, the sailor coral and shells, the painter his picture. Those who have neither poem nor lamb nor corn nor picture still can give a gift which is " a portion of thyself." And so we offer a portion of ourselves to you.

May we have the inspiration of our Heavenly Father throughout the coming year to give cheer to one who needs cheer; to give companionship, which is warmer than a scarf; to give sympathy which does not wear thin like a glove; and to give the love that the Master would have us give.

We sincerely wish you all, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

LeGrand P. Backman.
Edith P. Backman.

GREETINGS FROM ZION.

To the members and friends of the Church of South Africa, the Lord bless you all. Sister Dalton and I hold you in fond recollection and though we cannot write as we desire still we want you to know of our deepest appreciation for your love and friendship, together with thanks for the many things you have done for us.

Will you please accept our good wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and though we are far away, we still think of you with homesick feelings many, many times.

Again, God bless you.—Your Gospel brother and sister, Don Mack Dalton and Geneve J. Dalton, Gerald, George Edward and baby, Lena Gene, nine months old.

Christmas—is Christmas.

No other day has behind it such traditions. In all the world around, no other day can compare with it.

Christmas is more than Christ's birthday—much more. There was a Christmas, under another name, among people who had never heard of the Carpenter of Nazareth. The celebration of the day as Christ's birthday has endowed the occasion with a new holiness. It has purified and exalted 25th December and has made of it the day of days. And yet the Yuletide was lovely even in Pagan lands.

Giving and receiving presents are not all of Christmas. It is good to give and receive. Either warms the heart, but there is a human tradition that is more than material. It is deeply spiritual.

Charles Dickens came close to expressing that indefinable spiritual significance of Christmas in his "Christmas Carol." He recognized the all-pervading, all penetrating spirit of Christmas. That spirit is a cumulative thing.

It is as if all of the peoples of the past ages were joining in one grand effort to make those at the moment living sense the deep and life-giving currents of the human heart.

Because we have over-reached ourselves a bit in modern times, many of us say we'll be glad when Christmas is over. Yet, how much poorer, spiritually, the world would be without this Day of Days.

If fairies or angels were to dance around a cauldron tossing into it, as the witches did, their mystical ingredients in the play "Macbeth," the component parts that go to make Christmas, they would reveal a heap of tender things.

Christmas was not made in a day: it was made through the ages. The fact that men have shockingly abused it and it still lives stands as a testimony of the esteem in which people hold it.

Santa Claus is a sort of personification of Christmas virtues. That is why a large tobacco company can never be forgiven for placing a cigarette in the hand of this benevolent, personified essence of the human heart. Through the ages, Santa has been built to bless, not to destroy. He is everything wholesome and good woven into one personality that can never really live, but who can never, never die.

"Whether you look or whether you listen,
You hear life murmur and see it glisten,"

says Lowell, speaking of June. So it is with Christmas. No one can escape it. It came to all from the very breasts of our mothers. It is all-enveloping like sunshine, and like sunshine it warms and heals despite the fact that it sometimes casts shadows. The shadows, be it remembered, are caused always by the Spirit of Christmas's striking personalities which are absolutely spiritually opaque or have been so cracked and warped that the spirit of Christmas passing through them ceases to be pure and ecstatic.

And so—Christmas is Christmas. Built through the ages it will live on and on—a tender, beautiful day.

MY PRAYER.

By Elder Ray F. Marsh.

For friends and loved ones, kind and true,
For all they've done, and yet still do,
For prayers, thoughts, flowers and all gifts too—
Dear Lord, I thank Thee.

For health and strength, and blessings rare,
For life of friend and mine to spare,
For tender mercy, love and care—
I thank Thee.

For Gospel light and faith sincere,
For supplications thou didst hear
In times of need and dwelling near—
Dear Lord, for all, I thank Thee.

Christmas.

" Shine out, O, glorious star
For this is Christmas morning,
Glad tidings from afar,
Christ, the Lord is born.
Ring, ring, happy bells,
Bells of Christmas!
Ring, ring, happy bells,
Christ, the Lord is born."

—Old English Carol.

Christmas is at once the most joyous and the most sacred of all the days of the year. It means the consciousness that God is love and that our love for one another is the mighty solvent to cure all human ills. The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of unselfishness—the spirit of giving and making glad the hearts of others.

It is the one season of the year when we abandon ourselves to our emotions. At Christmas the heart dethrones the head. It compels us to do high things. It also permits us to do foolish things. It sanctions our being childlike and bland. It allows us with gallant idiocy, when we have only a dollar in the world, to spend the dollar on someone else. It urges us to be gloriously, recklessly, unselfish. Spiritually it draws the whole human family close together.

Why is it we look more eagerly forward to Christmas than to any other holiday? Is it because that is the one season in the year when the heart is an absolute monarch? That hard word " practical " is a tyrant most of the year, but when Christmas comes we can live spontaneously as children live. Men and women let business cares go bang. They break their slavish routine, shed their hard crusts and come forth once each year as children of God.

Christmas has magic in it. When November is nearing its end men and women, too, begin to cast long glances homeward, perhaps to fidget, to rebel against their usual tasks. " Christmas will soon be here," is a saying that plays havoc with the humdrum of ordinary life. Christmas is the real turn in the year. We approach it cheerily; we have a fine time when it comes; we loaf, perhaps hunt; visit for a week after it is over, and then perforce we gird ourselves to begin a new year, looking forward with longing eyes to the next Christmas. That is very vividly true of children, and what is true with them would be true with us if we are free. " Men are but children of a larger growth."

Discussion as to the exact day of the Nativity for years and years has been both loud and long. Sermons innumerable have been preached and numberless treatises written concerning it. The reasons for assigning 25th December as the precise date have also been both manifold and multiform, but all to no purpose, at least so far as arriving at any degree of certainty is concerned. Changes in the calendar down through the years is a factor that has proved disconcerting.

Whether we look upon the matter from a religious or purely secular viewpoint, Christmas is pre-eminently a season of gladness and general rejoicing, and prompted by the spirit of the time, we are animated by a sense of charity and good will towards all mankind.

Christmas is also an anniversary around which cluster memories of our childhood and recollections of happy moments associated with the days that are gone, when we hung the biggest stocking we could find along the old, open fireplace and arose the next morning before the peep of day to see what dear old Santa Claus had brought us and to say " Christmas gift " to our brothers and sisters.

Actuated by such sentiments as these, then let us hope that each of us, according to his or her idea of happiness, may enjoy a right merry Christmas ourselves and do all we can to help those who are in need—the poor who are always with us—to do likewise.

THE HOPE INDOMITABLE.

King Hassan, well beloved, was wont to say,
When aught went wrong or any labour failed:
" To-morrow, friends, will be another day! "
And in that faith he slept, and so prevailed.

Long live this proverb! While the world shall roll,
To-morrows fresh shall rise from out the night
And new-baptize the indomitable soul
With courage, for its never-ending fight.

No one, I say, is conquered till he yields,
And yield he need not while, like mist from glass,
God wipes the stain of life's old battle-fields
From every morning that he brings to pass.

New day, new hope, new courage! Let this be,
O soul, thy cheerful creed. What's yesterday,
With all its shards and wrack and grief to thee?
Forget it, then—here lies the victor's way.

—Anonymous.

AN HONEST PRAYER.

No better saying can be said of man
Than that he prays to God an honest prayer:
Beneath the cloak of penitence he kneels
To ask his King to give him greater light,
To blot away the sins of yesterday
And help him on the morrow to do right;
At prayer, he tries to hide no crime from God,—
Confesses all, determines to do right—
To always love his neighbour as himself
And serve the Lord with all his strength and might.
What calls forth better estimation than
The sending up to Him an honest prayer!

—Joseph R. Meservy.

Mission News

CAPE DISTRICT.

Elder Ray F. Marsh, District President, " Cumorah," Main Road, Mowbray.

Elders Julian R. Durham, Wm. Alton Sorenson, Ross D. Benson, Harlan W. Clark, Dale A. Wilcox, O. Claron Alldredge and Harold Dean Jensen.

Meetings held at above address, Sundays, 10.30 a.m. and 7.0 p.m.; Mutual, Tuesdays, 7.45 p.m.; Relief Society and Priesthood Meeting, Thursdays, 7.45 p.m.

The Season's Best Greetings are extended to all from everyone at " Cumorah." May the hours of this Yule-tide be happily spent and the New Year hold for each the best of everything.

After a long illness, Brother Frederick Porter passed to the other side on the 3rd of December. It was indeed a welcome release after a life full of much experience. Brother Porter has been a member of the Church for many years and died in full fellowship and with a burning testimony of the truth of the Gospel comforting his soul. Many missionaries have spent pleasant hours in his home and his hospitality was outstanding and the news of his death will bring many reflections to the host of friends that knew him. Sister Porter has been patience personified and has always been at his side to comfort and cheer him and although her burden has been great, she has always been ready with a smile. Her faith in the Gospel has been her comfort and stay and will continue to bless her.

" O teach us all to know
That e'en when hearts are breaking
Thou art near
And Thy great love smiles on the way we go."

—B.

Although " Cumorah " failed to win the Major Log, Saturday, 21st November, found them trimming their old rivals, the Sea Point Cardinals, 13 runs to 10. Maitland was the next team to twice taste defeat at the hands of Cumorah. In the final game of the Major Log, 28th November, they finished up on the short end 9 to 6. Cumorah started the Vacation Log well on Saturday, 5th December, by again emerging victorious 7 to 6.

President LeGrand P. Backman, Elders Wm. A. Sorenson and Ross D. Benson were the speakers on the 22nd November at the Parow Branch Conference. A splendid gathering heard the fine words of President and the Elders.

Brother Frederick Porter, after a lingering illness, succumbed 3rd December. His funeral was held at "Cumorah" the following day. Mr. W. H. Rankin, father of Sister Janet Wintle, passed away Saturday, 21st of November. May the comforting influence of our Heavenly Father attend the bereaved.

"Happy Birthday" was sung at "Cumorah" for Elders Ralph W. Millburn and O. Claron Alldredge who have passed their twenty-third milestones. The former on 22nd November and the latter on the 28th. May success and good health attend their righteous efforts.

During the past month the personnel of the Cape District has been somewhat altered. Elder W. Dean Taylor was transferred to East London, 24th November; Elder Julian R. Durham, who has been suffering from ill-health, returned to the Cape on the 7th of December from Durban. The following day Elder Dean A. Ellsworth left for Durban.

Elders Harlan W. Clark and O. Claron Alldredge left 24th November, for the Strand where they visited saints and friends. They returned after an enjoyable overnight stay.

We are very happy to welcome the following into the Church: On 24th November, Agnes Alice Marshall Forbes Wilson was baptised by Elder Ray F. Marsh and confirmed by Brother Thomas Wilson; Eleanor Nel Helm was baptised by Elder Ray F. Marsh on the 1st of December and confirmed by President LeGrand P. Backman. May the spirit of the Lord ever guide the footsteps of these fine people.

Under the direction of Elder Ray F. Marsh, the Cape District conference was held at "Cumorah," Sunday 6th December. The Officers, and Teachers, the Sunday School-Fast and Testimony, and the afternoon Auxiliary sessions were very inspiring and well attended. At the closing General Session in the evening, despite rainy, inclement weather, an overflowing, enthusiastic crowd heard valuable words of encouragement and instruction from President LeGrand P. Backman and Elder Ray F. Marsh. The sacred cantata by J. S. Witty, "From Manger to Cross" with Sister W. Julyan, Mrs. Len Taylor, Brother John T. M. Wilson and Elder Dean A. Ellsworth as soloists was presented as the concluding feature of the conference. We are deeply grateful to Brother Alvin Park for the sound system which permitted those who were unable to find seats in the chapel to also hear the conference from the Mission Home.

PORT ELIZABETH.

Elder Jack H. Bradshaw, District President.
Elder Joseph R. Meservy.

Services: Forresters' Hall, Palm Street, Sunday, 10.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Weekly auxiliary meetings, also the Port Elizabeth and Mount Pleasant Primaries, have been discontinued for summer vacation. An unusually successful Primary year was brought to a triumphant close by a party for all the children, given on Friday, 27th November.

A social bazaar was held at Forresters' Hall on Saturday evening, 5th December. All present had an enjoyable time. Thanks is especially due the sisters who helped with the Primary party and bazaar, and is also extended to everyone who assisted in any way.

On Saturday, 21st November, Susannah Marie Johanna Jackmina Whitaker was baptized by Elder Jack H. Bradshaw and confirmed by Elder Joseph R. Meservy; also Mavis Faith Doller was baptized by Elder Joseph R. Meservy and confirmed by Elder Jack H. Bradshaw. We heartily welcome Sister Whitaker and little Mavis into the Church and sincerely pray that our Heavenly Father's choicest blessings will be given them and that by keeping His commandments, they will ever hold and cherish a testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel.

Mr. Havelock Trollip, who was injured by a locomotive and who has been confined in the Provincial Hospital for a number of weeks, has sufficiently

improved to return home. May he be blessed with a speedy, complete recovery.

Mr. and Sister Havelock Trollip are the happy parents of a baby daughter, born on Thursday, 3rd December. Congratulations.

The Port Elizabeth Branch regrets to lose Sister Florence Smith, one of our faithful members, who has moved to Johannesburg. We wish her every blessing in her new home.

We have been favoured with visits from Elders W. Dean Taylor and Julian R. Durham. Their visits were both inspirational and enjoyable.

EAST LONDON.

Elder Omer J. Smith, District President.
Elder W. Dean Taylor.

Services: Sons of England Minor Hall, Sunday, 10 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

On Wednesday afternoon, 18th November, a delightful social for the Primary children was held at Brother and Sister Basso's home.

Responsibility for branch affairs fell temporarily upon the shoulders of the travelling Elders when Brother C. H. Jubber was released from his office as Branch President on Sunday, the 21st of November.

After a careful investigation into the doctrines of the Church, Peter William Danielson became convinced that they were true and expressed the desire to become a member of the Church, so on Friday morning, 27th November, at a quiet ceremony at Second Creek on the Buffalo River, he was baptized by Elder John F. Reynolds and confirmed a member of the Church by Elder Omer J. Smith. We all wish to congratulate him on the step he has taken.

A fatal motor-bike accident on the night of 25th November, claimed the life of Brother Sylvester W. Banks, who died in the hospital early the next morning. Our heart-felt sympathy goes to his bereaved wife, mother and family.

On 2nd December, the infant child of Brother and Sister Sylvester W. Banks was blessed by Elder Omer J. Smith and given the name of Owen Oswald Banks.

Sister Celia Russell, who has been ill for some time and who underwent an operation on the 1st of December, is reported to be convalescing satisfactorily.

Elder Julian R. Durham gave us a pleasant surprise when he paid us a short visit on his way to Capetown aboard the *Windsor Castle*.

TRANSVAAL DISTRICT.

Elder Howard C. Badger, District President.
Elders Lincoln W. Kener, Robert R. Child, Dee R. Parkinson, James C. Shumway, Timothy H. Irons, Frank W. Duncan, Victor J. Allen and Wilford Lee Freeman.

Meetings held at 395, Commissioner Street, Sundays at 10.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.; M.I.A. meeting held Tuesday at 8 p.m.; Relief Society and Priesthood meetings held on Thursday at 8 p.m.; Primary on Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Liahona Branch, 20, Petunia Street, Rosettenville: Sundays at 10.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Waterval Branch, c/o J. P. Brummer, Waterval Estate: Sundays at 10.30 a.m. and 6.00 p.m.

Springs Branch, "Castle Mansions": Sundays at 10.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Pretoria Branch, 173, Church Street, East, Poynton's Building: Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

The Transvaal District has been considerably strengthened the past month by the arrival of three additional missionaries. On the 25th of November, Elder Lincoln W. Kener arrived from Pietermaritzburg. Again on the 27th we welcomed Elders Lee Freeman and Victor J. Allen to the district. All these missionaries possess wonderful potentialities and we can expect great things to be accomplished. Members and friends wish them every success.

The Transvaal missionaries observed Thanksgiving Day as guests of Brother and Sister O. Layton Alldredge. We appreciate their kindness.

Ramah Branch News.

Brothers Kenneth Y. Sutherland and Mathers Savage delivered fine addresses to the members and friends at the monthly conjoint service at Ramah. Despite the rain, the attendance was commendable.

As a climax to the year's M.I.A. programme, the officers and members held a theatre party and buffet supper. The party was one of the year's nicest functions and the organizers are deserving of

praise. This officially closed the M.I.A. activities for the year.

On 18th November, at Ramah, a pleasing concert was given for charity in aid of the Hope Home. A large crowd attended and were most enthusiastic. Miss Tudhope and her pupils were the donors.

Miss Laura Mullins, of Cape Town, has been a Rand visitor during the month. We enjoyed seeing her again and hope her stay was pleasant.

Ramah Branch is happy to welcome back to the Transvaal Sister Olga Hubert and Brother Clarence Randall. Both have been in Durban for the past few months.

The annual Relief Society Bazaar held forth at Ramah on 2nd December. A dance in the evening topped off the year's work. The officers and members of the Relief Society worked diligently for its success. The ladies deserve our appreciation for their noble work.

Sister Cecelia Louw is very ill at the hospital at this writing. Her many friends and well-wishers send their love. May our Heavenly Father soon restore her to health.

Another M.I.A. Sunday evening service was conducted on 6th December. Elder H. C. Badger was the speaker, his topic being, " For What Are We Living? "

Through the medium of the papers, the Wembley American baseball team is getting good publicity for the Church. At the present time they are in a tie for the league lead with Johannesburg and Crown Mines.

At this time, the closing of the year, the Elders of the Transvaal wish to express their gratitude and appreciation to all the members and friends who have assisted in any way to make the year 1936 a happy one for them.

Liahona News.

A well attended social was held at the home of Brother and Sister Fred Spear on the 20th of November, on the occasion of the closing of all auxiliaries.

On 11th November, the Primary children closed their year with a party, at the conclusion of which each member of the Primary was presented with a book. The prizes for best attendance were awarded to Mavis and Graham Schubach, who each had 100 per cent. Well done, children!

As we look back on the past year, from the point of view of the auxiliaries, we can regard it as a great success. 1936 is the first year that these organizations have been functioning in Liahona. We specially like to mention, with a vote of thanks, the good work which has been done by Sister Spear as Primary Mother, Sister Smith as Relief Society President and Brother Elmer Muir as President of the Mutual Improvement Association.

During the past month the baby of Brother and Sister Charles Schubach has been very ill, but we are pleased to say that he has recovered.

The motto of Liahona youth is " Onward and Upward " (especially " Upward "). Brother Peter Schubach evidently had this in mind when he climbed the tree, but unfortunately he fell and broke his arm. He suffered severe pain, but owing to his faith and a strong healthy body, his arm is now progressing very well.

The Liahona Saints unite in wishing the rest of the Mission a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year, with unlimited progress in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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